MINNESOTA ROUTE
TO THE
GOLD MINES
OF
IDAHO

Graff

[illegible]

The Newberry Library

The Everett D. Graff Collection
of Western Americana

2757

THE

NORTHERN ROUTE

TO

IDAHO:

AND THE

PACIFIC OCEAN.

PUBLISHED BY
D. D. MERRILL,
BOOK SELLER AND STATIONER
SAINT PAUL, MINN.

THE NORTHERN ROUTE TO IDAHO AND THE PACIFIC.

Disadvantages of the Southern Route.

THE Overland Travel to the IDAHO GOLD Mines, now principally proceeds via Omaha, the Valleys of the Platte and Sweet Water, and Great Salt Lake City. The distance by this route from Atchison is 1670 miles. It deviates nearly 1000 miles from an air line; the rugged nature of the country requiring the crossing of the mountains to the vicinity of Great Salt Lake City, and the re-crossing of them to reach the mines. Aside from the fatigue and delay thus incurred, the immense deserts over which the route passes, almost destitute of herbage and fuel, and the alkaline waters of the lakes and streams, often fatal to man and beast, imperiously demand, if possible, a shorter line of transit.

The Northern Route.

Such a one can only be found north of the Black Hills, and there an almost direct route from the Mississippi is practicable,—via Fort Abercrombie or Big Stone Lake, Sibley's crossing on the Missouri, and the valley of the Yellow Stone, as laid down on the accompanying map.

THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY

Not too far North.

LONDON and PARIS are north of the route thus laid down, and STOCKHOLM and ST. PETERSBURG are a long distance above it. Gov. STEVENS, in exploring for the Northern Pacific Road, passed safely to the Pacific many miles north of it, as also did Capt. FISK recently in two successive journeys.

Stages have made regular trips twice every week, this winter, from Saint Paul to Fort Abererombie, and the mail has been carried semi-weekly through to Pembina near the British line. At Pembina, agriculture is profitably pursued, the products being corn, potatoes, barley and wheat, the latter averaging twenty-five bushels to the acre.

During the month of December, 1863, Captain WHITNEY traversed the country lying between Mankato and Fort Thompson, on the Missouri, (above Fort Randall,) with a large train of heavily loaded wagons, without accident or loss of life.

It is a well known fact that the temperature increases towards the West along the proposed route. Less snow falls, and the climate is much milder than farther South. This is easily accounted for by the difference of their respective altitudes. On the Northern route, above the level of the sea, the altitude near the 106th meridian is.....2360 feet. and on the Southern route east of this point, it is.....4470 feet; and rises westward to 6060 and.....7220 feet, and at Fort Bridger to.....8374 feet.

While in the mountains at the crossing to Salt Lake City the traveller is in danger of freezing to death, and the ground is covered deeply with snow during the whole winter; in the same season further north cattle can themselves find grass upon which to feed.

Capt. FISK, in his last report to Congress, thus describes a valley in the mountains just beyond the termination of the Northern route.

"The Deer Lodge Valley is an admirable tract for grazing and farming. Wheat and Oats grow luxuriantly at Dempsey's farm, and vegetables of all kinds are raised. The climate is warm and mild; snow seldom falls to more than the depth of two or three inches, and melts during the day. Grant's cattle range the valley the whole winter; many of these animals are so fat that their appearance is similar to that of Berkshire shoats fed for the fair. Some of my party in 1862 left work cattle here in the fall that were thin and worn out with the journey across the plains; in April they were fat and sold for Beef Cattle."

From Saint Paul to the Missouri.

The fact that General SIBLEY traveled between these points with a large army, and an immense train, without the loss of a man, is a sufficient evidence of the practicability of this portion of the route. The point of crossing is one which has been for many years used by the Indians; old, deeply worn trails leading down to it from every direction.

From the Missouri to the Yellow Stone.

Dr. F. V. HAYDEN, in a recent work prepared under the direction of Capt. WM. F. RAYNOLDS, of the Topographical Corps, U. S. A. says:

"The rivers running into the Missouri from the South-west, including the Grand and Heart Rivers, (the latter near SIBLEY'S battle ground,) are well timbered along their banks, the trees growing in large groves, or points, frequently reaching from one bluff to the other, the whole width of the valley. The largest and most common trees are the Cotton-wood, Elm and Ash, though others of smaller growth are found. Though there are many tributaries to the rivers named, running through the interior, most of them are short, and only convey the water produced by rain or snow to the parent stream. These are termed by the traders or voyageurs, coulees, seldom extending more than from one to three miles in length, and usually covered with various bushes, small trees, grass and weeds.

"Between rivers, and beyond the heads of the coulees, or dry valleys, are large tracts of table land, from ten to fifty miles in breadth, on which no timber is seen, but where the spontaneous grasses are very thick and of excellent quality. It is in such spots as these that Buffalo delight to remain undisturbed, quietly cropping the choice blades, in happy ignorance of the hordes of hunters roaming through the country. Springs impregnated with saline substances are often met with, and the water is drank with eagerness by these animals."

The Dr. says further, in reference to the country west of the Missouri, and north of the Black Hills:

"In traveling across this portion of the country in a transverse direction, a man on foot is seldom obli-

ged to camp without wood or water, the heads of the valleys or ravines of one water course extending within a distance from five to forty miles of the tributaries of another. Springs and small groves of trees frequently occur in the intervening prairie, and good encampments can usually be found by any one familiar with the geography of the country throughout the length and breadth of the interior."

Dr. HAYDEN recently stated to a member of the Chamber of Commerce of the city of Saint Paul, the route proposed in this map being under discussion, "that there was no doubt that the route from Minnesota into the new gold mines would prove the best, both in winter and summer, and that there was no obstacle in making a good road through the country from the Missouri at almost any point west of the Shayenne to the valley of the Yellow Stone."

From the Yellow Stone to the Mines.

The route now passes through the valley of the Yellow Stone, said to be rich in gold. Capt. FISK, in his late report, says of it:

"This is the garden of the unexplored North-west, a country rich in mineral deposits, abounding with streams, covered with luxuriant grass, and possessing a mild and warm climate, free from snow in winter, and a rich fertile soil. This is the great winter resort of the buffalo, and the favorite hunting ground of most of the tribes of North-western Indians.—Light draught steamboats with heavy freight can ascend from the Missouri to the mouth of the Big Horn. From the Yellow Stone Valley to the mines the country has been often traversed."

Shortness of the Route.

The route traveled by Capt. FISK was north of the one now proposed, and much more circuitous. By actual measurement it was over three hundred miles shorter than any other road traveled. By the one now proposed the advantage in distance over the Southern route will be 942 miles.

When to Start and How to Organize.

All parties should be at Saint Paul, Minnesota. the place of rendezvous, by the first of July.

All Railroads make daily connections with the Boats for Saint Paul.

When you may not be favored with the Government escort, all should be well armed. You should move in parties of one hundred or more, and of all things do not fail to organize yourselves thoroughly. Keep vigilant watch of stock and camp at night. On the march keep your train together and move in regular order.

Whenever possible you should camp so as to form a corral of all your wagons.

No man who makes a long overland journey is independent of those with whom he is traveling; but there should be from first to last a realizing sense of your mutual dependence upon one another. Leave no neighbor behind in distress. Choose a leader, and respect always the rules and regulations he may deem necessary to establish.

Supplies.

Whether with or without an escort, no person should migrate to the mountains or Pacific country overland with less than (9) nine months' supplies. Take plenty of such staple items as flour, bacon or clearside meats, beans, mixed vegetables, groceries. etc; and do not lug along chairs, bureaus, or bedsteads.

Your spare funds invested before you start in the necessaries of life, tobacco, ammunition, boots and shoes, etc., will bring at the end of your journey at least five hundred per cent advance.

Take such implements as will suit the work you intend to engage in.

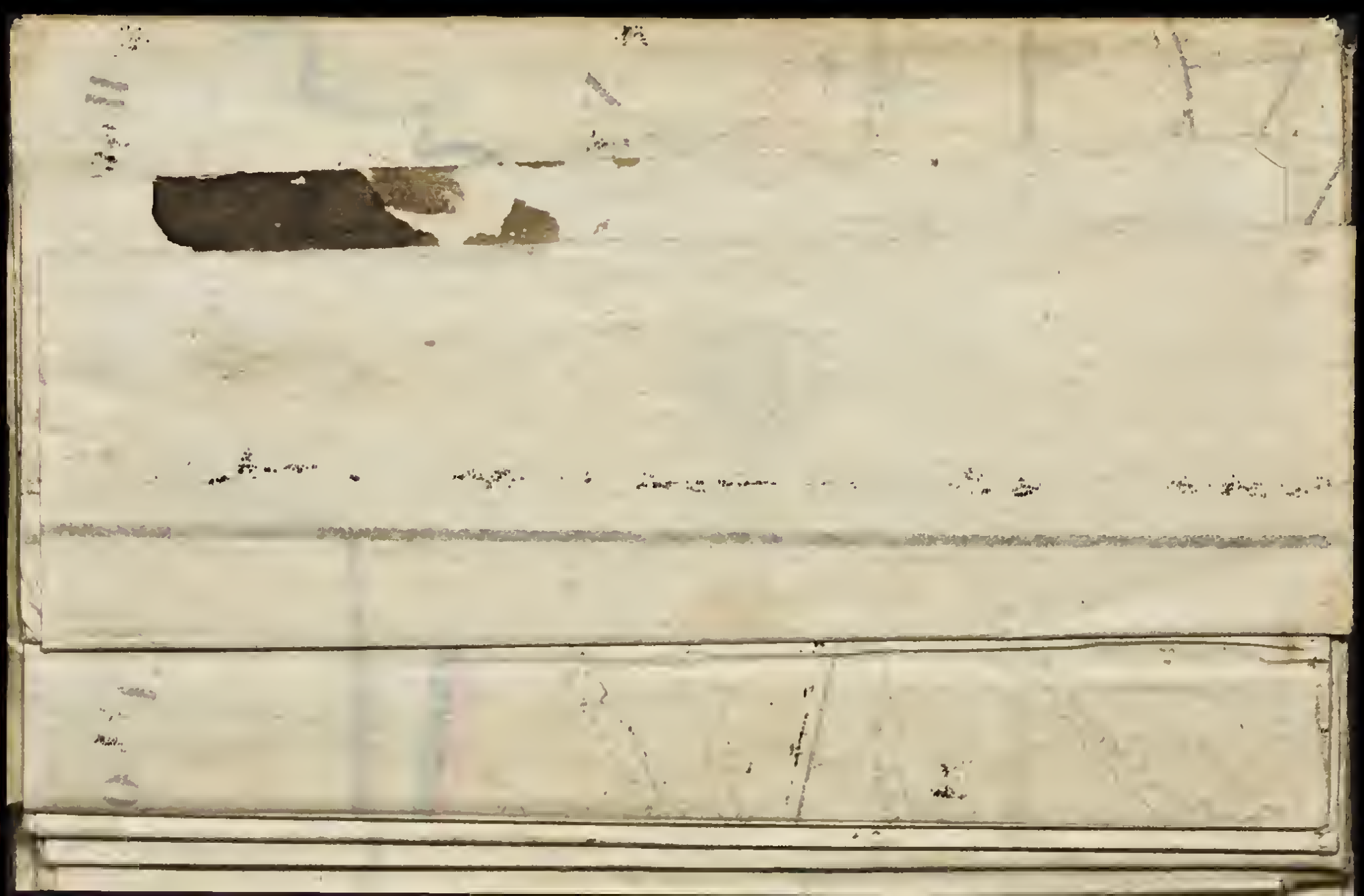
Teams, Wagons, &c.

The cheapest and best teams for your freight-wagons are well-broke, young-bodied, solid cattle, with muscle and motion, and when possible there should be three yoke to the wagon. These teams will outlast horses or mules, and in any event will thrive so as to make good beef.

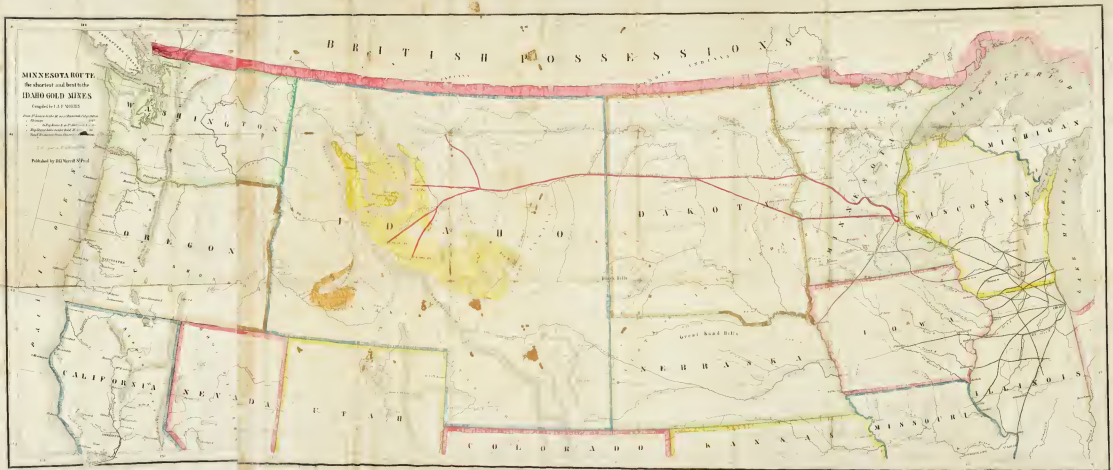
The thimble-skame, Yankee or Michigan style of wagons, well covered, is the best for general use for freight, and no wagon should be loaded heavier than two thousand pounds.

PRICE OF THIS MAP $1.25, FOR SALE BY PUBLISHER.

Printed by D. RAMALEY, Saint Paul, Minn.



Hamilton, &c
State of Minnesota
Number 14 & 1860
The owner of this book
is
Louis H. Allen
Lake Elysian
Ton 118 R 23 —
Section 4


MINNESOTA ROUTE
the shortest and best to the
IDAHO GOLD MINES
Compiled by J. F. WILLIS
Published by Ed. Marsh & Co.
BRITISH POSSESSIONS
WASHINGTON
OREGON
CALIFORNIA
NEVADA
IDAHO
UTAH
COLORADO
DAKOTA
NEBRASKA
KANSAS
MINNESOTA
IOWA
WISCONSIN
MICHIGAN
ILLINOIS
Black Hills
Great Bend
Fort Benton
Fort Union
Fort Pierre
Fort Randall
Sioux City
Council Bluffs
Omaha City
Nebraska City
Fort Kearney
Fort Laramie
Fort Bridger
Salt Lake City
Fort Hall
Fort Boise
Fort Walla Walla
Fort Vancouver
Portland
Fort Colville
Fort Benton
Fort Union
Fort Pierre
Fort Randall
Sioux City
Council Bluffs
Omaha City
Nebraska City
Fort Kearney
Fort Laramie
Fort Bridger
Salt Lake City
Fort Hall
Fort Boise
Fort Walla Walla
Fort Vancouver
Portland
Fort Colville

Intentionally Blank Page